

Let the negotiations continue. Let us resolve our differences. If the Medicare premium increase is taken off the resolution and addressed in the overall context of reform, there is no reason we cannot find agreement on a balanced budget by a date certain.

That will take some time. We are not going to do it today; we are not going to do it tomorrow; but we are going to do it. In the meantime, we ought to agree to a clean continuing resolution for several more days to reduce the real harm to Federal employees, to reduce the harm to the U.S. taxpayer, to allow us to do our real work and resolve our differences on reconciliation and the budget.

MAKING FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS, 1996

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I send a bill to the desk providing for an extension until December 6 of the continuing resolution which expired last night, and I ask that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be read a third time and passed, and that the motion to reconsider be laid on the table.

Mr. DOLE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I respectfully object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

MAKING FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS, 1996

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I send a bill to the desk providing for an extension until November 17 of the continuing resolution, and I ask that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be read a third time and passed, and that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I respectfully object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from South Dakota.

BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, as we speak, they are meeting now in S-207. The President's Chief of Staff, as I understand; the Secretary of the Treasury; and the OMB Director, Alice Rivlin, are meeting with Republicans and Democrats, members of the Budget Committee, in an effort to see if there can be some resolution.

I am not an advocate of Government shutdowns. I have been here when they have been shut down when we had Republican Presidents in the White House and a Democratic Congress and the Democrats were insisting on certain things, and the Government shut down.

So this is not without precedent. But I have never thought it was the best way to do business, and I hope it can be resolved very quickly.

I hope that while they are trying to negotiate, hopefully, some agreement, that we would not engage in debate on the Senate floor that might drive us apart. I do not have any quarrel with what the distinguished Democratic leader has said. I do not share every view he has expressed. And, again, I would say that when the President talks about Medicare, I hope that the people understand we are talking about part B; we are talking about that part of Medicare where the persons out there working every day making \$15,000 \$20,000, \$30,000 a year are putting money into the general revenues to pay 68.5 percent of someone's part B premium, whether they are worth \$50,000, \$100,000, \$1 million or \$1 billion. If the President is trying to protect those people, then I fail to understand why in this case.

All we want to do is just freeze that until we have a negotiated settlement, because sooner or later we are going to have to address Medicare in order to save it, protect it and strengthen it. That is what it was about, and that issue will not go away.

But I think, as I watched the President today very carefully, he shifted his stance today. Yesterday it was Medicare, Medicare and Medicaid. Today it was balance the budget, balance the budget, balance the budget.

I would again say, if the President wants to balance the budget, I am prepared to call up the motion to reconsider the constitutional amendment for a balanced budget. I just need one vote. One of those Senators, one of the six who voted "no" who voted "yes" previously, could change their vote at this moment and send a message across America that we want a balanced budget. And I call upon the President to get the six of his colleagues together and see if he cannot persuade one or two to vote for a constitutional amendment for a balanced budget. That, I think, would let the American people know that this is a bipartisan effort and that we do search for a balanced budget.

Failing that, I think the only recourse we have on this side, and one we are certainly going to pursue, is to balance the budget by the year 2002, balance the budget by the year 2002. Eighty-three percent of the American people want to balance the budget. You cannot balance the budget by adding new programs. We are going to spend more, even with the balanced budget by the year 2002, spend more for Medicare, more for Medicaid, and more for all these programs.

But I happen to believe that we are on the right track. We are doing the heavy lifting now. We are taking the hits on this side of the aisle. We know it is easy—we read the numbers—it is easy to say, "Let's keep hammering those Republicans." But sooner or later the President must recognize that

he is the President, he has to provide leadership, he has to make tough choices. The tough choices are not to say, "I'm not going to tolerate any tinkering with this program or that program or that program." That may be the political easy choice, but it is not going to solve our problem.

Unless we balance the budget, we are not being fair to children, children who are 1 year old or 2 years old or 5 years old, who have to look at the future, where they are going to be when they are 20 years of age or 25 years of age. I really believe that it is in our mutual interest to try to work this out. We are talking about an 18-day CR. It is not the end of the world. I hope we can find some resolution.

I am also sympathetic with reference to extension of the debt ceiling. I have seen that over the years used as a vehicle for riders. I remember managing a debt ceiling when I was chairman of the Finance Committee many years ago. We had foreign policy amendments offered and adopted by my colleagues on the other side. We had all kinds—I think we ended up with 19 amendments on the debt ceiling that we had to take to conference with the Ways and Means Committee. And most of it was, of course, completely outside the jurisdiction of the Ways and Means Committee.

So, I do not want anybody to misunderstand this has never happened when we had Republicans in the White House and a Democratic Congress. It has happened. And it probably will happen in the future. Maybe it should not happen. Maybe we ought to do something to prevent it from happening, but we have not done that yet.

I think on that basis, since they are, right within 20 yards of here, trying to reach some agreement, I hope that we will be permitted to stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair. And if we cannot reach some agreement—well, if we hear no agreement can be reached, then we will have to decide what to do for the rest of the evening. But if an agreement can be reached, I hope the House would take it up and send it over here tonight and pass it, and then do precisely what the Democratic leader wishes to do, and that would be to end the shutdown and get people back to work.

Mr. DASCHLE. Would the distinguished majority leader yield?

Mr. DOLE. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished minority leader is recognized.

Mr. DASCHLE. Let me say that I am disappointed that we could not get agreement on this resolution. I think the colloquy we have just had, Mr. President, demonstrates, regardless of what may have happened in the past, why it is so important to have a clean continuing resolution so that we can negotiate a balanced budget, so that we can negotiate whatever it is we may do with regard to Medicare.

We recognize that Medicare is going to have to be reformed. But to single